

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 NEA-10 EA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SAJ-01 EB-07 COME-00 IO-13  
TRSE-00 CPR-01 XMB-02 AID-05 OES-06 /119 W  
----- 105148 /10

R 231030Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
TO AMEMBASSY RABAT  
SECSTATE WASHDC 6776  
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 3120

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, EAID, KS, MR  
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF ROK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH  
MAURITANIA

REF: (A) RABAT 6728(NOTAL), (B) NOUAKCHOTT 1118, (C) NOUAKCHOTT  
2251

1. WE ARE DELIGHTED TO HEAR THAT ROK AMBASSADOR IN RABAT HAS  
LEARNED THAT GIRM MAY BE PREPARED TO BARGAIN DIPLOMATIC RECOG-  
NITION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE. FACT THAT KOREAN  
AMBASSADOR ENCOUNTERED "UNRESPONSIVE" MAURITANIAN MISSION CHIEF  
IS NOT SURPRISING; PREVIOUS EFFORTS OF OTHER ROK DIPLOMATIC  
PERSONNEL AROUND CIRCUIT TO PLOW SAME FURROW HAVE ENCOUNTERED  
RESISTANT GROUND. WE DEDUCE FROM THESE EXPERIENCES THAT GIRM  
DIPLOMATS HAVE STANDING INSTRUCTIONS TO REPORTELL ROK APP-  
ROACHES TO MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TO SEEK DETAILED INSTRU-  
CTIONS. SINCE FOREIGN MINISTER OULD MOUKNASS IS BELIEVED TO BE  
ONLY MFA OFFICIAL WITH AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS ON THIS VERY  
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SENSITIVE SUBJECT, AND SINCE HE HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY ON ROAD LATE-  
LY, UNRESPONSIVE GIRM AMBASSADOR IN RABAT WAS IN ALL  
PROBABILITY SIMPLY UNINSTRUCTED. REPORTED ROK RESONSE  
TO INDICATIONS OF MAURITANIAN RECEPTIVITY (OFFER OF CABINET-  
LEVEL DELEGATION) IS ALSO TYPICAL OF NEXT-STEPS PROPOSED  
SEEMINGLY AUTOMATICALLY BY OTHER ROK REPRESENTATIVES.

SEEN FROM HERE, PROPOSED ACTIONS ARE TOO EAGER, TOO HEAVYHANDED, AND TOO PUBLIC FOR SITUATION AT HAND. PERHAPS GREATEST SERVICE AFRICA CAN RENDER OUR KOREAN ICENDS IS TO INSURE THEY APPRECIATE REALITIES OF MAURITANIAN STANCE ON KOREAN QUESTION AND COMPLEXITY OF GIRM'S ATTITUDES TOWARD AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA. OF SEVERAL ELEMENTS, THREE ARE KEY: FIRST - EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT OF MANY SENIOR MAURITANIANS TO DPRK AND ITS LEADER REMAINS INTACT DESPITE PYONGYANG'S "UNFORTUNATE MISTAKE" OF RECOGNIZING SAHARA REPUBLIC (DPRK EMBASSY HERE STILL HAS STAFF OF SEVEN); SECOND - GIRM'S VIEW OF ROK AS AUTHORITARIAN, IMPERIALIST PUPPET REMAINS UNCHANGED; THIRD - CURRENT GIRM WILLINGNESS TO MOVE BACK FROM ITS EARLIER ANTI-ROK POSTURE IS POLITICAL TACTIC DESIGNED TO CONVEY AND REITERATE PUBLICLY ITS TEMPORARY DISPLEASURE WITH DPRK. WHILE GIRM IS INTERESTED IN VIEWS OF OTHERS (INCLUDING KING HASSAN) ON KOREAN QUESTION, IT WILL CONTINUE TO DEFINE ITS OWN POSITION ON BASIS OF ITS OWN APPRECIATION OF EQUITIES INVOLVED.

2. IN RESPONSE REQUEST REF A, WE WOULD LIKE, AT TOP OF OUR LIST OF SUGGESTIONS, TO REITERATE OUR EARLIER RECOMMENDATION THAT ROKG ADOPT SINGLE, UNIFIED, COORDINATED APPROACH TO PURSUIT OF ITS POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES IN MAURITANIA. TO CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF THIS MATTER, ROKG HAS DESIGNATED SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FROM MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL FROM THREE ROK EMBASSIES AND OFFICIALS/REPRESENTATIVES FOR TWO "PRIVATE" COMMERCIAL TRADING ORGANIZATIONS--EACH ONE ILL-INFORMED AND INEXPERIENCED IN THINGS MAURITANIAN-- TO PURSUE ITS POLITICAL GOAL OF REESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMACY. CONFIDENTIAL

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TIC RELATIONS WITH GIRM. THERE HAVE PROBABLY BEEN OTHER APPROACHES, FOR EXAMPLE, IN NEW YORK. JUDGING FROM QUESTIONS VARIOUS ROK REPS HAVE PUT TO OTHER US MISSIONS WHICH HAVE THEN BEEN RELAYED TO EMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT FOR RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATION, EVERY ONE OF THE ROSTER OF KOREAN REPS HAS BEGUN AFRESH FROM SQUARE ONE IN HIS PURSUIT OF MAURITANIAN BUSINESS. SINCE GIRM HAS DEMONSTRATED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN RECENT MONTHS THAT IT IS NOW PREPARED TO PERMIT REPRESENTATIVES OF SOUTH KOREA TO COME TO NOUAKCHOTT FOR INFORMAL CONTACT AND DISCUSSIONS, WE SUGGEST, VIGOROUSLY, THAT ROKG APPOINT ONE SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE TO PLAN, DIRECT AND IMPLEMENT ITS UNIFIED MAURITANIAN POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, STATIONING HIM PERHAPS IN DAKAR WHERE HE CAN COMMUTE EASILY AND FREQUENTLY TO NOUAKCHOTT FOR THE EXTENDED SERIES OF LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS WHICH WILL BE REQUIRED TO MOVE GIRM ANY FURTHER ALONG PATH TOWARD ROK'S ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 3120

IN SELECTING CAMPAIGN CHIEF, ROKG WOULD DO WELL TO KEEP TWO  
CONSIDERATIONS FIRMLY IN MIND: FIRST - SENIOR (IN RANK AND  
AGE) MAURITANIANS SPEAK ONLY FRENCH AND MODERN LITERARY  
ARABIC. THERE ARE AT PRESENT ONLY THREE JUNIOR OFFICERS  
IN MFA WHO ARE CAPABLE (JUST) OF ACTING AS ENGLISH-  
LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS, AND ONE OF THEM WAS TRAINED IN  
MOSCOW. SECOND - GIRM FOREIGN MINISTER OULD MOUKNASS IS  
SMART, SOPHISTICATED AND HIGHLY-EXPERIENCED DIPLOMAT  
FORMED INTELLECTUALLY IN CLASSIC FRENCH TRADITION AND  
SCHOOLED IN LAW. HE IS NOT RPT NOT IMPRESSED BY INADE-  
QUATELY CONSIDERED OR SLOPPILY EXECUTED DIPLOMACY. MORE-  
OVER, DECISION TO PURSUE DISCUSSIONS ON RECOGNITION OF  
ROK WILL BE MADE AT PRESIDENT-NATIONAL POLITICAL BUREAU  
LEVEL ON RECOMMENDATION OF MOUKNASS, AND NEGOTIATIONS WILL  
BE CARRIED OUT BY HIM OR BY ONE OF HIS TRUSTED PROFESSIONAL  
COLLEAGUES (SIDI 'ALI--FORMER AMBASSADOR TO DPRK--OR CHEIKH  
SIDDIYA) WHO ARE PRODUCTS OF SAME FRENCH CLASSICAL MOLD.  
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ONLY IF ROKG DESPATCHES A WORTHY INTERLOCUTOR TO NOUAKCHOTT CAN IT EXPECT TO MAKE REAL PROGRESS TOWARD ITS ULTIMATE GOAL.

3. RE DEVELOPMENTAL QUID FOR POLITICAL QUO: IT IS SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT, NOT HAVING CLOSE KNOWLEDGE OF PARTICULAR CURRENT STRENGTHS OF KOREAN ECONOMY, TO SUGGEST POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROJECTS. BUT FOLLOWING AREAS AND POSSIBILITIES COME TO MIND:

(A) FISHERIES: THIS IS CATALYST FOR KOREAN INTEREST IN MAURITANIA. CONSIDERING LACK OF MAURITANIAN MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY AND, TO DEGREE, INFRASTRUCTURE IN MARINE INDUSTRY, COMMERCIAL FISHING AND FISH PROCESSING REMAIN AREAS WHERE NEED AND SCOPE FOR KOREAN ASSISTANCE ARE GREAT. ALTHOUGH PHYSICAL FISH PROCESSING FACILITIES IN NOUADHIBOU ARE REPUTEDLY LARGEST ON WEST AFRICAN COAST, THEY HAVE NEVER OPERATED EFFICIENTLY OR TURNED A PROFIT.

(B) HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION: MAURITANIAN ROAD NETWORK IS EMBRYONIC, WITH BARELY 600 KILOMETERS OF PAVED, ALL-WEATHER HIGHWAY. ONE OF HIGH PRIORITIES OF RECENTLY-APPROVED THIRD FIVE-YEAR PLAN IS ROAD CONSTRUCTION. WITH EXPERIENCE KOREAN FIRMS HAVE ACQUIRED OF LATE IN SAUDI ARABIA, ROK ASSISTANCE HERE, EVEN ON "COMMERCIAL BASIS" NOW GOVERNING KOREAN CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IN MIDEAST, WOULD PRODUCE BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIVIDENDS.

(C) OPPORTUNITIES ALSO EXIST IN FIELDS OF AGRICULTURE (RICE CULTIVATION, FOR EXAMPLE, WHERE LEAD HAS BEEN TAKEN BY PEKING) UCD SMALL INDUSTRY. WHOLE RANGE OF SMALL-SCALE IMPORT SUBSTITUTION INDUSTRY PROJECTS IS STILL IN DISCUSSION STAGE. KOREAN TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL EXPERTISE WOULD BE ATTRACTIVE TO BOTH GOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE SECTOR MANAGERS. IN VIEW VERY REAL POSSIBILITY THAT GIRM MAY BE HESITANT TO MAKE OVERNIGHT SHIFT FROM NORTH TO SOUTH KOREAN DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE, CHANNELING MAJOR PORTION OF PROJECTED SOUTH KOREAN AID EFFORT THROUGH MAURITANIAN PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD (A) EASE GIRM'S POLITICAL PROBLEM AND (B) PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT IMPETUS AND ASSISTANCE TO GIRM'S DECLARED OBJECTIVE OF FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF PRIVATE SECTOR OF ECONOMY.

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(D) STRONGLY SUGGEST ROKG TAKE STEPS TO OBTAIN COPY OF JUST RELEASED THIRD FIVE-YEAR PLAN IN ORDER TO MATCH KOREAN INTERESTS AND CAPABILITIES WITH MAURITANIAN NEEDS AND PRIORITIES.

4. FOR RABAT: FOR ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON GIRM-ROK RELATIONS,

WE ARE POUCHING TO POL CHIEF COPIES OF ANY EARLIER REPORTING  
AND ANALYTICAL WIRES NOT SENT TO RABAT.  
HANDYSIDE

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## Message Attributes

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